



**CITY of NORTHAMPTON
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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Northampton Health Department Announces Opening of New Weekly COVID Vaccine Clinic Located in Thornes Marketplace

NORTHAMPTON - Beginning March 3, 2022, the Northampton Health Department will offer a new COVID-19 vaccination location at Thornes Marketplace. Walk-in clinics will be held every Thursday in March from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., and three Saturdays during the month. All clinics will be located at the second floor kiosk between Booklink and Backstop.

Health Director Merridith O'Leary says, "I strongly encourage everyone to get their booster vaccine to help protect themselves and the most vulnerable members of our community." Director O'Leary adds, "This new location is very accessible for downtown residents and workers. It is easily walkable, close to downtown PVTa bus stops, and is adjacent to the parking garage where the first hour is free. The time frame includes between meal hours for restaurant workers and classic afterwork evening hours until 6 p.m. I am very grateful for the partnership of Thornes Marketplace." Jody Doelee of Thornes Marketplace added, "Thornes is proud to partner with the City of Northampton to assist with safeguarding the Northampton community by adding this critical new vaccine location in the heart of downtown."

In February 2022, the CDC released studies showing that the mRNA vaccines, Pfizer and Moderna, have prevented significant severe illness.

The CDC examined data on 93,000 hospitalizations and 241,000 emergency department and urgent care visits across 10 states during the Delta and Omicron waves. In the study, about 10% of people were boosted and over 50% of people hospitalized were over 65 years old. During Omicron, vaccine effectiveness against hospitalization was 91% during the first two months after a third dose and remained high, at 78%, four or more months after a third dose.

Public Health Nurse Kate Kelly emphasizes, "We need everyone to keep their guard up against future COVID. The booster doses have been very effective at keeping people out of the hospital, even with the Omicron variant which is still here. We need to work as a community to protect ourselves and our neighbors against future variants and move back toward our more usual lifestyles. Now is not the time to let down your guard."

All COVID vaccine clinics in March are walk-in. The clinics offer any dose of any COVID vaccine including Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson. Please note that the CDC, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and Northampton Health Department all recommend the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over the Johnson and Johnson Vaccine.

The Health Department will continue to offer walk-in vaccine clinics in March on Mondays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Elks in Florence, in addition to the new location at Thornes Marketplace. All doses are available at all clinics.

- first or second doses for anyone aged 5 years and older, and
- first, second, or booster doses to anyone aged 12 and up, and
- specific third doses for individuals with moderate to severe immune compromise ages 12+

COVID vaccination is always free and, while an ID or insurance is not required, we request that if a person has either of these that they bring these along with their CDC vaccination card.

For more COVID-19 vaccine information or to register for an appointment, visit www.northamptonma.gov, email kkelly@northamptonma.gov or call 413-587-1215.